

Amendment No. 2 to HJR0216

**Hargrove
Signature of Sponsor**

AMEND <SB>

House Joint Resolution No. 216*

FILED

Date _____

Time _____

Clerk _____

Comm. Amdt. _____

By deleting all language in its entirety and by substituting instead the following language:

A RESOLUTION relative to the United States Government.

PART 1.

WHEREAS, at the end of this past century, the United States of America was enjoying record budget surpluses and, in 1999, for the first time in over 25 years, bought back U.S. Treasury bills, notes, and bonds to reduce our national debt; and

WHEREAS, since 2001, the United States Congress, at the request of the Bush Administration, has raised the debt ceiling limit annually to prevent financial default to the now unprecedented level of \$8,074,000,000,000, which is approximately 70 percent of the entire U.S. economy; and

WHEREAS, today the United States is, by far, the largest debtor nation in the world and foreign countries are purchasing our debt in record amounts; since 2001, the amount of federal private debt owned by foreign interest has increased by 73 percent. According to the U.S. Treasury Department, major foreign holdings of U.S. debt total over \$1.93 trillion; and

WHEREAS, as of November 2004, U.S. Treasury securities held by foreign countries include China with \$191.1 billion, OPEC nations with \$60.6 billion, Caribbean Banking Centers with \$76.2 billion, and Japan with \$714.9 billion; and

WHEREAS, between January of 2001 and May of 2004, the foreign holdings of U.S. debt have increased \$740 billion with Japan adding \$356 billion, China \$116 billion, and Caribbean Banking Centers \$41 billion. In 2003, 70 percent of the federal deficit was borrowed from foreign investors; and

WHEREAS, as of November 2004, 43 percent of the U.S. debt is held by foreign interests; China now holds \$241 billion, an increase of 142 percent since 2001; and

WHEREAS, the high level of foreign holdings could have a debilitating impact on our economy; a country threatening to sell large volumes of U.S. Treasury securities would result in pressure on the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates and thus fuel higher inflation, putting our economy at risk for a large-scale recession; and

WHEREAS, equally threatening to the American economy are the massive annual interest payments on the U.S. debt, which are estimated to total over \$1.09 trillion between 2004 and 2008; and

WHEREAS, the foreign policy of our great Nation should not be put in a position to be held hostage because our government financing is dependent on funds from foreign countries that oppose our policies; and

WHEREAS, to enjoy the freedoms that their forefathers fought and died for, our children and grandchildren should not inherit an America that has been mortgaged away. Congress must make a commitment to bring the federal budget back into balance; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that this General Assembly officially expresses its displeasure and dismay with the unprecedented level of the Federal Debt and our nation's increasing dependency on foreign funding to cover the expanding budget deficits.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that appropriate copies of this resolution be prepared and sent to each member of the U.S. Congressional Delegation from Tennessee, the Speaker and Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives, the President and Secretary of the U.S. Senate, and each member of the U.S. Congress.

PART 2.

WHEREAS, on September 11, 2001, this Nation was the target of cowardly terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington D.C., which resulted in the loss of thousands of American lives; and

WHEREAS, since that infamous day, the brave men and women of our armed forces have been deployed to Southwest Asia to overthrow a brutal dictator and free the people of Iraq, a mission that has been overwhelmingly successful; and

WHEREAS, our most trusted and valued colleague and friend, Representative John Mark Windle is currently serving his country in Iraq as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom ; and

WHEREAS, Operation Iraqi Freedom and the continuing War on Terror have exacted a price, and this Nation has been forced to borrow money to ensure that the United States of America remains safe and free; and

WHEREAS, while this General Assembly recognizes that there is a deficit at the federal level of government and is concerned about the national debt, we are even more concerned about the continued prosperity, security and freedom of our great Nation for this and future generations of Americans; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that it is the sense of this General Assembly that while we are concerned about the national debt, we most fervently support our troops serving overseas as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom and the War on Terror, many of whom have made the ultimate sacrifice of their lives and to whom we are eternally indebted.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an enrolled copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Speaker and the Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives, the President and the Secretary of the U.S. Senate, each member of Tennessee's congressional delegation, and to Representative John Mark Windle in Iraq.